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TOKYO OLYMPICS

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Japanese tennis player Naomi Osaka lit the Olympic cauldron during the Opening Ceremony, setting the Tokyo Games on a course likely to have twists.

IT'S GAMES TIME

Story by RACHEL BLOUNT • Star Tribune • Photo by MORRY GASH • Associated Press

TOKYO - The theme for the Tokyo Olympics is "United by Emotion." Friday night, as the Summer Games opened a year late, there were plenty of emotions to choose from.

Relief, during an Opening Ceremony delayed for more than a year by the pandemic. Apprehension, on a day when 19 more people affiliated with the Olympics tested positive for COVID-19. Anger, from

protesters whose cancel-the-Olympics shouts were occasionally louder than the show in a nearly empty stadium.

With the postponed Tokyo Games officially underway, the organizers who spent more than \$15 billion to stage them are counting on the athletes to chase away the doubts. A strange, subdued Opening Ceremony showed it won't be easy.

During their procession into the sta-

dium, athletes wore masks and waved to vacant seats in a 68,000-seat venue where only 950 spectators were allowed. Because of COVID-19 protocols, many athletes aren't even in Tokyo yet; only about 230 members of the U.S. team walked in the ceremony, a small slice of a delegation with 613 athletes.

They have dealt with a gamut of emotions, too, during a year of waiting and

wondering whether these Olympics would happen at all. Friday, as fireworks exploded over their heads, the only thing they felt was jubilation.

"We're here," said baseball player Eddy Alvarez, who carried the American flag into the ceremony with basketball player Sue Bird. "We made it. I know it's been a tough year and a half, for all of us. But See **OLYMPICS** on C8 ▶

Souhan: The Opening Ceremony left us wanting more — or less **C8** • Sports section **C3**

U.S. GYMNASTS BEGIN COMPETING SATURDAY Watching the first wave of U.S. gymnastics competitions at the Tokyo Games will require caffeine Saturday — early, late or both. Here's the scoop today for early birds and night owls:

EARLY: U.S. MEN

The U.S. men start competing at 5:30 a.m. local time. If you're up early, fire up the Peacock streaming service or Peacock app on your smart TV to watch **Shane Wiskus** (Mound Westonka High, Gophers) and the Americans post qualification scores. If you're sleeping in Saturday, check **startribune.com** midmorning to read Rachel Blount's reporting on the event.



LATE: U.S. WOMEN

Grace McCallum (left, of Isanti) and **Suni Lee** (St. Paul) make up half of the U.S. women's team, and you might be half-awake late tonight — er, early Sunday — when the Americans begin competing. At 1:10 a.m., they'll make their Olympics debut in qualifying. Watch live on Peacock, and **startribune.com** will have the results when readers wake up Sunday.



OPENING HONOR



Joe Fahnbulleh, a sprinter from Hopkins who became an NCAA champion at Florida, was one of the Liberian flagbearers at Friday's Opening Ceremony. Fahnbulleh's parents are from Liberia. He will compete in the 200-meter dash beginning Aug. 1.